

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in the above-identified application. Of these, claims 1, 3, 4, 6, and 8-12 are rejected; claims 2, 5, 7, and 13 are objected to; and claims 14-20 are allowed. Applicant, having amended the application, respectfully requests reconsideration.

Amendments to the Specification

The specification is amended to correct minor typographical errors: no new matter is added.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. Section 102

Claims 1, 6, and 8 stand rejected under section 102(b) as anticipated by Zarreii (US 5,122,064). Each rejection is addressed below.

Claim 1

Claim 1 recites a connector system that includes "an elastomeric conductor disposed between ... first and second wiring boards..." The elastomeric conductor is not sandwiched between the first and second wiring boards; instead, the elastomeric conductor establishes contact between perpendicular sets of conductors. As stated in claim 1, the first wiring board includes "a second wiring-board surface supporting a second plurality of conductors extending in a first plane" and the second wiring board includes "a third plurality of conductors extending in a second plane substantially perpendicular to the first plane" (Claim 1). The recited elastomeric conductor is "in contact with ones of the second plurality of conductors extending in the first

plane and ones of the third plurality of conductors extending in the second plane substantially perpendicular to the first plane" (claim 1). The claimed elastomeric conductor thus establishes contact between sets of perpendicular conductors.

Figure 6A illustrates a circuit module that supports claim 1. In that example, a first wiring board 200 is connected to a second wiring board 500 (actually a pair of second wiring boards 500) that extends perpendicularly from the bottom of the first wiring board 200. An elastomeric conductor 402 establishes contact between conductors on the bottom surface of the first wiring board 200 and conductors on a surface of wiring board 500 that extends in a plane substantially perpendicular to the bottom surface of wiring board 200. The corresponding perpendicular conductors 210 and 510 are more easily viewed in Figures 2C and 5B, respectively.

Zarreii teaches, at Figure 7 and the corresponding text, a connector in which a strip of tape 100 carrying conductive pads 106 is disposed between corresponding pairs of conductors (e.g., pad 36 on board 20 electrically contacts pad 93 of connector 50 via tape 100). The pads interconnected by tape 100 extend in parallel with one another when assembled in the manner illustrated in Zarreii's Figure 3.

Tape 100 of Zarreii interconnect conductors that extend in parallel, and not conductors that extend in perpendicular planes as recited in amended claim 1. Claim 1 thus distinguishes that reference. The rejection of claim 1 over Zarreii should therefore be withdrawn.

Claims 6 and 8

Claims 6 and 8 depend from claim 1, and consequently distinguish Zarreii for at least the same reasons claim 1 distinguishes. The rejections of claims 6 and 8 should therefore be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 3 stands rejected under section 103(a) as unpatentable over Zarreii in view of Krajewski et al. (US 5,211,565), and claims 4 and 9-12 stand rejected under 103(a) over Zarreii alone. Each rejection is addressed below.

Claim 3

Claim 3 depends from amended claim 1, and consequently recites an elastomeric conductor in contact with substantially perpendicular sets of conductors. As noted above in connection with claim 1, Zarreii does not teach such a configuration. Krajewski similarly lacks any such teaching. Because the references, taking separately or together, fail to teach this aspect of claim 1, claim 1 and its dependencies cannot be considered obvious over Zarreii and Krajewski. The rejection of claim 3 over those references should therefore be withdrawn.

Claims 4 and 9-12

Claims 4 and 9-12 depend from amended claim 1, and consequently recite an elastomeric conductor in contact with substantially perpendicular sets of conductors. Zarreii neither teaches nor suggests such a configuration, so the rejections of claims 4 and 9-12 should be withdrawn.

Claim Objections

The examiner objected to claims 2, 5-10, and 13 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Each of claims 2, 5-10, and 13 depends from claim 1, so the foregoing arguments apply equally to those claims. Applicant thus requests the examiner withdraw the objections.

Allowed Claims

The examiner allowed claims 14-20.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing remarks and amendments, the pending claims are in condition for allowance; accordingly, applicant respectfully requests a notice of allowance. If the examiner's next action is other than allowance of the pending claims, the Examiner is requested to call applicant's attorney at (925) 621-2113.

Respectfully submitted,



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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first-class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Non-Fee Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on August 4, 2004.

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